

[DRAFT] EXTRACT FROM COMPLETION REPORT [PHASE 2] FOR KINROSS-SHIRE CIVIC TRUST
RAINGARDENS CHALLENGE

SUMMARY & ACHIEVEMENTS OF AIMS

a) Overall aims, objectives and achievements

The aim of the project is to promote raingardens in Kinross-shire as a means of drawing the community together to manage rainwater runoff for multiple community benefits. The overall aim, and primary parameter to measure success, was for there to be 20 raingardens in 2020 across Kinross-shire, counting existing, improved and new features, where a raingarden is any green infrastructure feature designed to accept rainfall runoff. Summary details are set out in the Table below.

Objective	Extent of achievement
Achieve 20 raingardens in Kinross-shire during 2020	<i>Exceeded</i> ; 39 raingardens by 15 th July 2021 (see Appendix 1).
Engage a wide range of stakeholders, including local communities, SEPA, Perth & Kinross Council, and Scottish Water	<i>Done</i> : primary mechanism was via articles and news items in the Kinross Newsletter & interviews with businesses, and local groups, also casual dialogue with passers-by when planting/assessing sites, & interviews with some householders. E-meetings with SEPA, PKC and Scottish Government. NatureScot published blogs too. Reached out to Scottish Water with one meeting & one E-meeting & submitted 2 successive proposals.
Encourage on-the-ground improvements	<i>Done</i> : 3 existing carparks being retrofitted with raingardens as part of extensions; 1 primary school; 15 new houses with houseplot SUDS agreed.
Obtain examples of how the process of implementing SUDS is being done.	<i>Done</i> : Important findings detailed in the report (section 2.1).
Support government in adaptation to extreme events by use of natural blue-green infrastructure	<i>Done</i> : Case study retrofit examples achieved; detailed in report. Examples of rain-filled swale & dry road doing its job featured in Newsletter article. Retrofit raingarden used in teaching at local school. Exemplar houseplot SUDS development agreed for 15 new houses (see section 2.3).
Support the Scottish Water storm water strategy for “No more in, what’s in out”.	<i>Done</i> : Vital identification of a range of options which can make the policy a reality. (Without options for the ‘water out, no more in’ it’s a pointless statement). Door to door survey not possible (Covid).
Raise awareness of the potential for raingardens as multipurpose landscape features	<i>Done</i> : 14 articles in the local Kinross Newsletter, plus 2 blogs for the NatureScot & dialogue with locals (see section 3.1). Visualisations used for potential main street transformation in Kinross (section 5)
Place-making enhancement opportunities	<i>Done</i> : Advocating a Raingardens Trail in West Kinross (section 4) Plus other examples in the report, including ecological design advice to businesses and the public sector re retrofit possibilities.

The work was supported by SEPA, Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) and Scottish Government, in partnership. The specific requirements of the Scottish Government support were: (a) provision of ecological design advice, and (b) surveys for retrofit opportunities, types of SUDS in use and inferred business preferences and public engagement.

b) Key learning points

1. A key driver for the raingardens work is the significant storm sewage overflow problems in Kinross (gross pollution of a local watercourse through a golf course, especially associated with heavy rain), and storm sewage from both Milnathort and Kinross as P inputs to Loch Leven. These polluting discharges are documented in a consultants' report for Scottish Water (Scottish Water report 2012), and investigations undertaken in parallel with this work (Flinn 2021).
2. Local flooding issues continue to be a problem in Kinross, Milnathort and Kinnesswood. In Kinross, concerns have led to locals setting up a flood risk management group. In Kinross, local councillors have indicated Scottish Water has told them that there are constraints in the Kinross sewer network which cause flooding regularly in the main street (The Muirs).
3. Local councillors, the Kinross-shire Civic Trust, The Kinross Rotary Club and other community groups and representatives have welcomed the raingardens challenge, including the potential for retrofit features to alleviate some of the above priority issues. A carbon limitation action group has been formed – yet to be contacted, but another useful driver (pumping storm water is a major contributor to CO2 emissions).
4. Despite the diversions and economic difficulties of covid restrictions, some local businesses have been willing to work on raingarden features on their premises, and in some cases create wholly new retrofit features.
5. Other businesses are willing to divert runoff to raingardens but are looking for contributions to the costs involved.
6. 'Wildflowers' and 'weeds' means different things to different people; creating realistic habitat enhancement is a long term task in established grass areas. To exemplify ecological place-making requires education as well as appropriate maintenance (including cut-and-take machinery). Perhaps focus on cost savings - "Beauty is in the eye of the budget holder" ...
7. Conventional landscape planting can still produce attractive raingarden features with multiple benefits.
8. A houseplot SUDS rationale has been developed with one housebuilder and could become a demonstration development for climate change resilient housebuilding nationally.



c) Working within COVID constraints

The COVID-19 Pandemic seriously constrained this work. Even now we are still trying to get a date agreed for a site meeting with one of the important local community groups (an in-bloom groups of active volunteers who we have nonetheless engaged with on a chance encounters cautious basis during the life of the project). The initial plan was to do a series of presentations to the several active local community groups in the district but we were only partly into that process when stopped by the pandemic. The effects of the media focus on health risks include a reluctance to meet, even outdoors, for many. Volunteers in community groups are often retired and at least some of them have underlying health susceptibilities. Door to door surveys were not possible. Investigations at some of the business premises were similarly constrained, although site visits were achieved in most cases.